

NATO Ministers End 'Polite'

By Waverley Root

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PARIS, June 1—The defense ministers of NATO ended their two-day Paris meeting today with an uncommunicative communique which apparently reflected accurately the content of the discussions.

The meeting was described in American circles as one of the most harmonious the Organization has ever held. There seems to have been polite avoidance of any subjects on which it was known in advance that agreement was unlikely to be reached.

Non-American sources said the United States delegation had to push hard to get into the communique a reference to Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's proposal Monday for creation of a "select committee" to consider ways in which greater participation in nuclear planning could be granted to America's allies.

Even so, it was a minimum reference. I did not necessarily apply exclusively to McNamara's formula, since this was identified neither by name nor by description—McNamara's specific proposal of a four- or five-nation committee of defense ministers was not echoed—nor did it promise to do more than consider the subject.

"Years can pass while conferees are considering," a radio commentator remarked tonight.

Some of the other dele-

gations seemed confused about just what role the "select committee" was designed to play and particularly about whether its purpose was actually to increase participation of America's allies in the use of nuclear weapons, or simply to give them the satisfying illusion of increased participation.

Nevertheless American officials expressed themselves as satisfied with the wording of the communique and with the atmosphere of the meeting in general.

Some optimism was expressed about how other NATO members might react to the "select committee" idea—even the French. This seems to have been based partly on French Defense Minister Pierre Messmer's promise that the French would study the McNamara proposal. This, however, is the standard French offer in such occasions. It implies nothing as to the result of the study.

The first inkling of the French reaction may come Wednesday, after the weekly cabinet meeting, but some observers think it will be deferred for the next de Gaulle press conference, possibly at the end of July, which may feature a full length statement on NATO.

Meanwhile French sources are discounting the likelihood that France would go along on a 5-man committee because

it could be viewed as an answer to de Gaulle's September 1958 proposal of a 3-power directorate (the United States, Britain and France).

The French refuse to consider the 5-nation committee as a simple enlargement of de Gaulle's three-nation directorate, considering it instead as a basically different idea. De Gaulle's directorate, they point out, was not to be within NATO, but aside from it. Its membership was determined by the fact that the three powers named were the three Western possessors of the atomic bomb, a qualification which the two added countries would not have.

Finally, a committee on

which two nations (West Germany and Italy have been suggested) which usually support United States policy closely would be added to de Gaulle's three would not be particularly palatable to the French, who would risk finding themselves most of the time on the short end of a four-to-one division.

The conferees do not seem to have drawn any closer concerning basic strategic issues.

Asked if there had been much resistance to McNamara's strategic concept of the graduated response, American sources avoided an answer by opining that it was not particularly useful to go into the

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"theological" aspects of strategy.

McNamara took advantage of his presence at the NATO defense ministers meeting to assure America's allies that reports that the United States is withdrawing atomic weapons from Europe in a program for the denuclearization of that area are unfounded.

"There is no truth whatever in the repeated rumors about denuclearization or the withdrawal of atomic weapons from Europe," he said after the ministers' meeting, just before taking his plane. "Quite the contrary is the case."

He said there were "thousands, literally thousands" of atomic warheads in Western Europe, and that their number has increased steadily in the last four years—by 10 per cent since last Jan. 1 alone. He said he reported to his ministerial States is still shipping warheads to Europe, and that 12 months from now there will

be 100 per cent more here than in 1961.

McNamara also supported strongly the maintenance of the forward strategy—that it, maintenance of a line of defense on West Germany's eastern frontier—and said that in carrying it out the United States would use whatever weapons were required to preserve the territorial integrity of Western Europe—an answer to critics of the graduated response concept who fear it would mean the overrunning of European territory by conventional forces while the United States held back from using the atomic weapon which alone could stop them.